

THE WAY TO NUTS 2 REGIONAL ESTIMATES IN THE PORTUGUESE EU-SILC SURVEY

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Abstract

The European Commission aims at implementing a Union where all people can realize their full potential whatever the region or city they live in. On the other hand, this objective is streamlined with five EU 2020 targets, in particular improving employment, research and development and energy sustainability, and reducing early school leavers and people at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

In the Europe 2020 Strategy context, promoting social inclusion and combating poverty are very important objectives both at national and regional grounds, leading the need of accurate regional poverty indicators. Reliable NUTS 2 data are necessary for all EU countries, not only for monitoring and fund allocation, but also for policy-making purposes.

However, by the time these needs were clarified, the implementation of EU-SILC in Portugal, as from 2004, strictly followed the framework regulation in what regards a nationally representative probability sample. In fact Portugal was already developing a household budget survey (IDEF) every five years, designed to collect the income components at a detailed level and using a NUTS2 representative sample. That allows for the calculation of reliable NUTS 2 poverty and inequality estimates every 5 -year.

The sample design of the Portuguese SILC survey ensured the representativeness of the sample at country level, only stratifying by NUTS 2 in order to ensure a better distribution of the sample but not fulfilling strict levels of error at regional level. As a consequence, some of the smallest regions, for instance the Algarve and the R.A. Madeira, show instable estimations

from year to year and a poor comparison with IDEF, not being compatible with the EU needs for accurate regional estimates.

Statistics Portugal designed a 4-year program, to achieve a regional representative NUTS 2 SILC sample in 2018. This target will be accomplished by increasing the sample size and sample allocation, which was recalculated to achieve NUTS 2 regional representativeness compatible to the precision requirements agreed at EU level (maximum of 2.5 percentage points to the standard errors of NUTS 2 At Risk Of Poverty or social Exclusion rate). Considering the current four year rotational pattern, the increase is being implemented by new rotation as from the 2015 survey (collecting 2014 income data), with full implementation in the 2018 survey (on 2017 income data).